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Rundfunkbeitrag (GEZ) — Obligation, Exemption, Costs

The Rundfunkbeitrag is €18.36/month per household. Find out who can be exempted and how.

Deutsche Begriffe: Rundfunkbeitrag | GEZ | Beitragsservice | ARD | ZDF | Befreiung | Bürgergeld | Wohnung | Härtefall

What is Rundfunkbeitrag?

Rundfunkbeitrag (colloquially "GEZ") finances public media in Germany (ARD, ZDF, Deutschlandradio). This is a **statutory obligation** — regardless of whether you own a television, radio, or have Internet.

Amount in 2026

• **€18.36 per month** (€55.08 per quarter) — amount **unchanged** in 2026

• A planned increase to €18.94 has been blocked; **Bundesverfassungsgericht** is reviewing the case (hearing on June 23, 2026), and from 2027 KEF proposes €18.64

• Quarterly billing: bank transfer, direct debit, or standing order

• **Per household, not per person** — flatmates under one rental contract pay together only once

Registration

After registration (Anmeldung), Beitragsservice will automatically send a notice. Register within a month on **rundfunkbeitrag.de**. Do not ignore letters — non-payment results in

reminders, interest, and enforcement.

Exemption and reduction

Full exemption (Befreiung):

- **Bürgergeld** (SGB II), social assistance (SGB XII)
- **BAföG**, benefits for asylum seekers
- Deaf-blindness / blind person allowance

Reduction to €6.12/month:

- Disabled person ID with **RF** symbol

Note — Wohngeld

Receiving Wohngeld alone does **not automatically exempt** you. However, you can apply for exemption as a **hardship case (Härtefall)** if your income is only slightly above the social benefit threshold.

How to apply

1. Online at **rundfunkbeitrag.de** → "Befreiung/Ermäßigung"

2. Attach a current document (e.g., Bürgergeld decision)

3. Exemption applies from the month of application, **not retroactively**

Important for foreigners

Rundfunkbeitrag applies to **all residents**, regardless of citizenship — including students and people in asylum proceedings (unless exempt).